

ART. XXXVIII.—*Extracts from the Records of the Boston Society for Medical Improvement, with Papers read before the Society.* Published in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.* By the Secretaries of the Society, CHAS. D. HOMANS, M.D., FRANCIS B. GREENOUGH, M.D. Vol. vi., 8vo. pp. 292, 172. Boston, 1876.

So far as we are able to infer from the headings of the various papers here presented, only the last one-third part, constituting the supplement, is now published for the first time. The preceding portions are extracted from the pages of the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.*

In the appendix we find an excellent description of the symptoms, and the post-mortem appearances in a typical case of Addison's disease, contributed by Dr. J. N. Borland. The white corpuscles of the blood were largely increased in number. Death occurred by asthenia.

Dr. Haskett Derby reports two cases as a text for advocating the modern operation for strabismus in preference to the older method. The present procedure consists, not as formerly, in a division of the muscle, but in a severing of its attachment or insertion. A new insertion occurs, further back, and the muscle itself is uninjured.

The veteran and justly eminent pathologist, Dr. J. B. S. Jackson, gives an interesting sketch of his observations during a brief visit to the Island of the Barbadoes. He testifies to the present existence of the "Barbadoes leg," and of the "Chigoe," or parasitical worm, which burrows into the flesh of the naked feet of the negroes. Phthisis was found to be not unknown, although the climate is tropical.

Dr. B. E. Cotting combats the idea that the resulting scar is any indication of the efficacy of vaccination. He made the experiment of subcutaneous vaccination, obtaining the febrile and the protective results without any external vesicle or cicatrix.

A series of five cases of paralytic affection of the extremities without brain-trouble is reported by Dr. J. Baxter Upham. The attacks occurred without apparent cause and in persons of robust health.

The history of ninety cases of pneumonia is given by Dr. Borland. They were treated in the Boston City Hospital. The treatment was eminently supporting. Milk was used as a drink, and beef-tea and wine-whey were freely administered. Twelve deaths occurred. Two very interesting cases of acute tuberculosis are contributed by the same gentleman.

A case of embolism of the external iliac artery, reported by Dr. George H. Lyman, is very instructive. Opium, bark, and stimulants assisted the patient to make a good recovery, after amputation of a gangrenous foot and leg.

Dr. C. Ellis contributes a very suggestive paper upon the Tendency of So-called Local Diseases to Generalization. The same gentleman gives an account of the post-mortem examination made upon a double monster—*ischiopagus tripus*—which was exhibited throughout the country some few years ago. The small intestines were in part distinct, and in part fused. One large intestine existed, and showed marks of being the union of two. The kidneys, one for each child, corresponded to the perfect lower limbs. One uterus with its appendages was easily recognizable, and also one bladder. A large cyst, upon careful examination, seemed to represent the other genito-urinary system. Other viscera were normally developed.

Dr. Joseph Sargent presents the results of a post-mortem examination made upon the body of a woman who, twenty years previously, impaled herself upon

the handle of a common pitchfork. The smooth and round-ended staff had passed up the vagina, through the abdomen and left diaphragm, and had broken or wounded the first rib. The autopsy showed the left lung compressed by the stomach and a large portion of the intestines, which had passed up through a hernial opening. Some agglutination, and other traces of inflammation existed on the peritoneal coat of the intestines near the diaphragmatic rent.

B. L. R.

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ART. XXXIX.—*Blood-letting in Puerperal Eclampsia, Pathology, and Therapeutics; the old and the new.* By HENRY FRAZER CAMPBELL, M.D., of Augusta, Georgia, Professor of Operative Surgery and Gynecology in the Medical Department of the University of Georgia, etc. etc. 8vo. pp. 48. New York: William Wood & Co., 1876.

THIS is a reprint from the August number of the *American Journal of Obstetrics*, and a very full and able discussion of the questions at issue between those who oppose, and those who advocate, the use of the lancet in puerperal eclampsia. A question of serious moment at the present day, in view of the light that physiology and pathology have thrown upon the causes which induce eclampsia, whether in puerperal woman, in cases of non-complicated Bright's disease in either sex, or in children. In fact the whole subject of convulsive diseases, their origin, and proper treatment, is more or less involved in considering the question at issue in the pamphlet. In no class of convulsive maladies is there more at stake in a given case, or more necessity for that coolness of judgment, which is based upon a clear appreciation of the indications presented, than in those which occur to pregnant, parturient, or post-parturient women. There was a time when, for want of a true understanding of the conditions which in many cases give rise to puerperal eclampsia, physicians bled almost universally as a remedy, and repeated in many cases the act of venesection several times; but this system so largely passed away, that the question of the justifiability of bleeding in any case arose in the minds of many practitioners, a question made perhaps less important than otherwise, but still very vital in many instances, by the introduction of valuable remedies into our pharmacopoeia that have been largely relied upon as substitutes for the lancet in controlling the convulsive movements.

No doubt the indiscriminate use of the lancet in former days, under a routine rather than a philosophic method of reasoning, did prove fatal to a large number of cases, where our present advanced knowledge teaches us it should not have been employed; but is it not equally certain that in many others which recovered, the loss of blood fulfilled the indications better than any system of medication without the lancet could have done, even provided that the bromides, chloroform, and hydrate of chloral had been known as they are now to us?

The pamphlet under review is one of a series of articles by leading medical reasoners, going to show that at least in puerperal eclampsia the abandonment of the use of the lancet is no longer believed to have been based upon sound physiological principles, except in perhaps a minority of the cases treated. The proportion of cases now saved is greater than when bleeding was generally resorted to, but not so much greater as to satisfy us that a return to venesection in certain types of the disease would not add to the proportion of cures. A reaction in favour of the lancet is evidently taking place in cases of puerperal convulsions, where there is no proof of the existence of granular degeneration